1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 FTL Thonga FTL

II. *Tribe, Groups and Clans.*

101/618 It is necessary first of all to define clearly the precise meaning of these three terms.

We reserve the term *tribe* for the totality of the Thonga nation. This word is frequently used to designate the smaller national units, which are called after some old chief whose descendants are still reigning, like Tembe, Khosa, Nkuna, etc. We prefer for the sake of clearness to call these small units *clans*, as there is certainly a great resemblance between them and the Scottish clans. As a rule all men belonging to a clan bear the name of the old chief, who is more or less considered the ancestor of them all. In the Tembe country, most of the inhabitants will salute each other with these words : "Shawan Tembe, good morning, Tembe" ! But Tembe, the name of the clan, means not only a group of people, but a certain part of the country south of Delagoa Bay. In that country men of other clans have settled. There are also sub-clans of the Tembe clan which have already adopted special salutations, because they have formed collateral branches of the big Tembe family. However the term *clan* is the best, I think, to designate this kind of national unit, as its origin is essentially familial. Now some of these clans, those which occupy the same tract of country, form *groups* because they speak the same dialect of the Thonga language.

III. *The generic Name of the Tribe.*

101/619 As we shall see, there is no true national unity amongst the Thongas (1). They are hardly conscious that they form a definite

193 (1) What orthography are we to adopt when using the Bantu proper names in the plural? Different systems are used in ethnographic books, but the following appears to me the most rational. When a Bantu proper name is used with its plural prefix, the addition of a final *s* is not justified ; but in that case the prefix ought to be separated from the root by a hyphen, in order that the uninitiated reader may understand at once that he is dealing with a plural. Thus I would write : Ama-Zulu, Ba-Ronga, etc.

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101/619 nation, and therefore they possess no common name for it. The name *Thonga* (pronounce *t* + aspirated *h*, not the English *th*) was applied to them by the Zulu or Ngoni invaders, who enslaved most of their clans between 1815 and 1830. The origin of this Zulu name is probably the term *Ronga*, which means Orient (buronga = dawn) and by which the clans round Lourenço Marques used to call themselves. According to the phonetic laws of the two languages *R* in Ronga becomes *Th* when pronounced by the Zulus. (Ex. Randja, to love, in Ronga, is thanda in Zulu ; raru, three, thathu.) This word Thonga became a nickname which, in the mouth of the Zulus, was almost the equivalent of slave, and they applied it to the whole Thonga stock ; the appellation is not liked by the Thongas, but I know of no other which would be preferable to it.

Strange to say, the Thongas of the Northern Clans, especially those of the Bilen and Djonga groups, like to call themselves *Tjongas*, the Hlengwes *Tsongas*. This word is perhaps originally the same as Ronga and may have meant also people of the East, although the *R* of the Ronga dialect does not permute regularly into *Tj* and *Ts* in the Northern clans ; but this meaning is doubtful, and has at any rate been forgotten. Another name, which is much used amongst white people to designate the Thongas, is the word *Shangaan*. Shangaan or Tshangaan was one of the surnames of Manukosi, the Zulu chief who settled on the East Coast and subjugated most of the Thongas at the time of Chaka. It is possible that this name was even older, and that it belonged to a chief who lived in the valley of the Lower Limpopo before Manukosi. At any rate, this valley was called Ka Tshangaan and its inhabitants Matshangaan. But this term was never accepted by the Ba-Ronga, who consider it as an

193 (in the singular : Mu-Ronga, Mo-Sotho), but never Ama-Zulus, Ba-Rongas. As however ordinary readers are not acquainted with Bantu grammar, I think it is more advisable to use these Bantu proper names without their prefixes, treating them as if they were English words, and, in that case it is necessary to add the final *s*, as we generally do according to the rules of European spelling. Many writers do not adopt this system in their books ; but write the plural in exactly the same form as the singular, and it is therefore impossible to distinguish between the two. This may lead to confusion. I therefore propose to write : a Thonga, the Thongas, one Hlengwe, two Hlengwes, but it should be remembered that the final *s* must not be pronounced.

101 619 insult. It is applied in Johannesburg roughly to all the East Coast "boys," even to the Ba-Chopi, who are considered by the Ba-Ronga of Delagoa Bay as much inferior to them. Its adoption would be objectionable on that account. I recognise that the word Ba-Thonga does not enjoy much more favour and is not quite satisfactory ; however considering that it means originally "people of the East" and that the tribe is indeed living in the eastern part of South Africa, it ought to be accepted in the course of time without much difficulty.

Let us remark that another tribe, quite different in language and ethnographic features, dwelling near Inhambane, quite close to our Thonga tribe, calls itself Ba-Tonga. But there is no aspirate after the *T* and this is enough to distinguish it from the Ba-Thonga.

IV. *The six Groups of the Thonga Clans.*

101 197 Let us consider briefly, with the aid of the accompanying map, these six main groups.

131 1. All round the Bay of Delagoa, we find the *Ronga group*. This word Ronga is a very old one and very convenient, as all these clans consent to be called by it. The real Rongas are, I think, the Mpfumo and the Matjolo clans, who are settled on the west of the Bay. South of the Bay is the Tembe clan and its two sub-clans, which have become independent : Matutwen and Maputju. North of Lourenço Marques are the Mabota and Mazwaya clans, the country of the latter, which extends on both sides of the estuary of the Nkomati, being called Nondwane. Further north are the two clans of Shirindja and Manyisa which form the transition to the following group. The new generation speaks a purer Ronga dialect, the old one more the Djonga.

Continuing our survey in a northerly direction, we cross two rivers : the Nkomati and the Olifant. From the Nkomati to the Olifant we meet with the Djonga group, and from the Olifant northward with the Nwalungu group. Djonga means

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THIRD PART

NATIONAL LIFE.

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618 619 186 Having sketched the Individual and Communal life of the Thongas, we will now consider the National life. We have seen what the *muti*, the Village, means to a Thonga. What does the Nation, *tiko* mean to him ? As we have already pointed out, what we call the nation, tiko, is not the big tribe, numbering many hundred thousand people, but the special clan to which this Thonga belongs. There is no feeling of national unity in the tribe as a whole ; its unity consists only in a language and in certain customs which are common to all the clans. So the true national unit is the clan.

CHAPTER I

THE CLAN.

A. THE ACTUAL ORGANISATION OF THE CLAN.

618 Whatever may have been the social system of the Bantus in past ages, the existing clan can be directly traced from the patriarchal family. I have particularly studied the composition of two of the Thonga clans, the Nkunas of Zoutpansberg and the Mazwayas of the estuary of the Nkomati. Let us see how the clan is composed in both these instances.

789 726 the fat collected in order to mix it with the war medicine, the flesh being left to the dogs to eat and destroy.

In some clans, chiefs possess *other personal charms* which are 643 789 237 very much dreaded and called *psitjemba*. So, in the Maluleke clan, each of the children of the ancient chief Mashakadzi received from him one of these psitjemba. It consists of a part of the skull of a child, the top of the head, where the pulse is seen beating at the fontanella. This has been smeared with the vitreous humour taken from the eyes of lions or elephants, and powders made from the skins of wild beasts. The possession of this charm gives the chief a supernatural power. If, being irritated with you, he invokes his gods by sucking it and emits the sacramental tsu, he can call on any wild beast he likes to kill you... He has sacrified with the psitjemba ; you will die!

643 787 825 Some chiefs of the Northern clans used to *swallow one of the stones* found in the stomach of a crocodile. It is said that crocodiles, when cut open, are found to contain a certain number of stones, as they are supposed to eat one each year, when the rainy season comes on. One of them is chosen and smeared with special medicines and swallowed by the chief. Natives firmly believe that this stone remains in the body of the chief, and that it is "his head, his life" (Viguet). When it is passed in his stools the first time, this is a premonitory warning. When it occurs a second time, it is a clear announcement that the chief is about to die. So chiefs can always know when their time is near. In other clans the crocodile stone is replaced by what is called *ndjalama*. Amongst Nkunas this word designates a kind of bright copper button, which the Pedis of the Palaora mine used to make and sell. But ndjalama also means large sized beads. Whatever it is, some chiefs swallowed the ndjalama and were warned by it of their death. This object, as well as the crocodile stone, is taboo for subjects to swallow. They would die. It is "buloyi bya hosi" — "the magical power of the chief."

643 619 On account of these powerful and dangerous charms possessed by them, chiefs of different clans regarded it as a taboo to stay in each other's company ; they were afraid lest they might be killed by the magical power of their colleagues. Maphunga